NBC NEWS - APOLLO 15 LAUNCH (7-26-1971)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N4-4xnkcStA (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N4-4xnkcStA)

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From July 26th, 1971 NBC NEWS John Chancellor & Jim Hartz report live from the Kennedy Space Center on the Launch of Apollo 15.

Launched at: 9:34:00 A.M E.T

Coverage runs from T- 8:10 - T+ 13:42

Apollo 15 crew:

Commander: David R. Scott

Command Module Pilot : Alfred M. Worden

Lunar Module Pilot : James B. Irwin

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full thrust is achieved on all five engines and uh each of these things weighs several tons and they they operate like a lever and as soon as a commit is made to launch all of them will fly back at once and uh it'll let go that's the that's a camera directly below the nozzles of the engines that camera is down in a uh and we see a picture from that camera for about oh one or two seconds after ignition and then it gets a little cloudy that's all the decision to let this monster 36 story tall rocket weighing over six million pounds i guess on its uh six and a half million pounds saturn fly the decision to let those hooks go at its base when it's all those engines are thrusting is taken by a computer uh things happen so quickly then that the computer is the only piece of machinery that is trustworthy to make those decisions in that amount of time well the final decision is although it can be overridden by man is really made by a machine which demonstrates the complexity of many of the things that are going on here we have a moment i can explain the sequence of that i just talked to a man about it because i had a question the impulse to fire the engines is given at 8.9 seconds before the liftoff the center engine is fired first and then two outer engines and two more outer engines and all all of them begin to fire within about a second or a little more and then during the next four seconds they're watching pressures build up so that we're now about four seconds from liftoff they have pressure sensors to determine whether the engines are up for full thrust and unless all five engines are running at ninety percent of thrust it will automatically shut down or the launch controller if you see something else going wrong or if you can see a direct readout he'll shut them all down and then try to find out what's wrong but in a period of

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find out what's wrong but in a period of less than nine seconds they make tremendously complex decisions now we're going to go to mission control and uh jack king five minutes 55 seconds and counting we'll still go just uh we're about to come up with some status checks now to determine the final status in the meantime the marginal test conductor flitz wydeck has come in over the circuit and informed the spacecraft commander dave scott the lunar marginal falcon and the rover are go dave scott uh thanked him for this and uh then also received a report from spacecraft test conductor skip children that the command ship which will be have the call sign endeavor also is go we've just completed our status reports and the launch operations manager paul donnelly the launch director walt kaplan and the mission director chet lee all have given their goals we're standing by for the swing arm to retract to its full fall back position it's moving now as we approach the five-minute mark in the count coming up on the five-minute mark mark t-minus five minutes and counting will go on apollo 15. this is kennedy launch control and so the access arms that they have to that rocket are now moving back and uh in about two minutes a little bit less the automatic sequence of the firing command will begin all this immensely complicated work going on down here by computers that were unimaginable 21 years ago and it was 21 years ago this week that they had the first rocket fired from this part of the world from this installation it was a very small event it was a german v2 the launch tower was a painter's ladder the launch pad was an 11 foot thick concrete chunk there was a lighthouse here which was the only thing they had to observe it from but it went off and it

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observe it from but it went off and it went 200 miles downrange and somebody said you know maybe there's a future in that question and we come now to this enormous complex of men and machines and fuel and everything else that we find here at cape kennedy now and you know three minutes and 52 seconds uh john c apollo 15 go john can you hear me yes i can is that lighthouse still there can you see it from where you are now yes i can't see it from here but the lighthouse is still down here let me tell you a funny story let me tell you what okay okay we used to have a lot of fun every time you probably remember mission control coming up with it now let's go to mission control to get an announcement this is kennedy launch control just past three minutes 30 second mark in the count the terminal sequencer has been armed and we are go launch operations manager paul donnelly just wished to prove good luck and grad speed and received an expression of thanks from all three crew members we'll be coming up shortly on the automatic sequence three minutes ten seconds firing command enable firing command on we have the firing command we're now on the automatic sequence and the tanks in the three stages the saturn five that contain those propellants will begin to pressurize the countdown is still proceeding and we're at now two minutes fifty seconds and counting we understand there's an estimate that there are more than a million people in the area here to view the launch the traffic has been heavy since two o'clock this morning the beaches are packed and the roads are packed two minutes 35 seconds and counting we're one entering our status board here in firing room one our uh ready light salon concerned with spacecraft emergency detection system instrument unit uh preparations are complete and the automatic sequence is continuing two minutes 20 seconds and counting with oxygen and eyes uh pressurized

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with oxygen and eyes uh pressurized as the countdown continues coming up in the two minute mark we'll be standing by for the cue ball cover to be retracted shortly atop the saturn five vehicle mark team is two minutes between minus two minutes and counting still going well propellant stable on board the vehicle the crew here in the firing room monitoring more than 300 redline values watching temperatures and pressures to ensure they do not go above nominal in the case that it did uh any one of these key people could call in to hold a countdown one minute at 36 seconds and counting still going well the pressurization sequence is still continuing in the vehicle now 90 seconds away from liftoff all still going well we'll go on internal power with the vehicle at the 50-second mark in the count we now get indications from our status board that all is still going well and the third stage is now completely pressurized coming up shortly on the one-minute mark we're now 70 seconds and counting second stage tanks are pressurized as our countdown continues mark t minus 60 seconds and counting on apollo 15 the astronauts are go launch vehicle and spacecraft components all go as our countdown proceed now 50 seconds we have the power transfer the vehicle now on the battery power in the vehicle and all is still going well we're marginal pilot jim rohn making some final checks now passing the 40 second mark spacecraft commander dave scott now has made his final check that is aligning the guidance system 30 seconds and counting the guidance system will go internal at the second mark now 25 seconds we have complete clearance for launch we are go 20 15 seconds guidance internal 15 12 11 10

00:08:01 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N4-4xnkcStA&t=481s)

12 11 10 9 8 ignition sequence start engines arm 5 4 3 2 1 all engines lines commit lift off we have liftoff at 9 34 a.m eastern daylight time the tower is clear and we have a roll program oh reports to flight director that s1c stage looking good uh [Music] going through maximum dynamic pressure this time

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magic each of the five s1c engines gulping three tons of fuel per second airborne that's your airport that was the center engine cutting off four are still burning my dynamics reports go for stating staging means the separation of the first stage from the remainder of the rocket there you are that first stage will uh land in the ocean about 373 miles downrange 47.9 altitude the escape tower separated and that was what they're talking about that stays on until well after the second second stage is ignited i'm coming up on 10 000 feet per second mark downrange 131 altitude 66.

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of the velocity needed to orbit downrange 190 miles altitude 79. velocity needed downrange 271 altitude 88 predicting nominal shutdown on the s2 stage 10 times are nominal a level 10 time will be eight plus three four and s2 cut off at niner plus zero

00:14:00 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N4-4xnkcStA&t=840s)

four and s2 cut off at niner plus zero minor about a minute and a half before that second stage engines just shut down 380 miles downrange altitude 94.5 velocity 15 000 feet cameras all of them until they were just a tiny little dot now as you can see we have an animation here fi for s4b to orbit capability mark you have it now all right downrange 479 altitude 96 now approaching 65 the velocity needed for orbit velocity now 16 700 feet per second official time of liftoff 34 minutes zero zero seconds point seven nine [Music] that was the second stage engines cutting off

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the in-ender engine center engine i should say is that off the outboard engines remain ignited for another couple of minutes downrange 660 mile altitude 95 miles 78 velocity required for orbit 15. communicator is called about six seconds to staging that means the remaining engines on the second stage should cut off capability this is what should be happening now mark you have all four now they've separated booster reports thrust okay on the s4b stage you have good thrust on the s4b the s4b is the third stage of the rocket yep 4.7 altitude velocity 23 230.

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first stage you should have landed in the ocean by now [Music] ocean about 20 minutes into the flight and the third stage when they're through with it they lane it toward the moon [Music] first team houston everything's looking uh perfect uh predicted cutoff time one one plus three seven howard oh roger one one plus three seven that obviously is 11 minutes and 37 seconds 1281 miles downrange 93.4 altitude 97 velocity 25 143 feet per second six and a half million pounds now weighs a little over 300 000 pounds the engine cut off on the um second stage booster confirms the s4b has shut down the um third stage ready okay houston

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third stage ready okay houston motors are off and the s4b occupiers altitude plus zero zero nine three two roger [Music] and the launch on this clear weather with high clouds thin layer of some clouds about 20 000 feet up did not keep us from watching that rocket go perhaps longer than we've ever been able to watch a rocket go in these programs before at about six minutes into this mission after liftoff apollo 15 was 90 miles up in the air and 275 miles downrange and we were still able to follow it with a camera which is an astonishing thing if you think about it we could hardly see apollo 14 at all after it went through low clouds here the last time so you have seen quite a lot and we now have right dead on schedule as i follow it an orbit isn't that right jim they were shooting for a 90 mile circular orbit and they got a 93.7 by an 88.5 and that's about as close as you can get under these circumstances and that's well with it and uh they'll go through the checkout list now a little bit later today they will fire the engine again and head for the moon so they're in in marvel to shape exactly where they want

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